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NOTES ON THE ORNITHOLOGY OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
FOR 1891.

BY THE RT. HON. LORD LILFORD, F.L.S., F.Z.S.

JANUARY.

1st. An adult female Scaup was picked up alive under the telegraph-wires near Thorpe Station, and brought to me. I could not detect any wound or outward injury, but the bird was so much exhausted, and so reduced in flesh, that I thought it better to kill it than to have it pinioned and put upon our fowl-pond. I also received a very fine male Kestrel alive from a tenant farmer at Slipton, with the information that it had been caught in his granary, to which it could only have attained access by the "cat-hole" in the door.

6th. I received a letter from Mr. Rowland Ward, informing me that on Dec. 24th, 1890, he had received, for preservation, a Bittern from Mr. T. W. Thornton, of Brockhall, near Weedon. I subsequently heard from Mr. Thornton, in reply to my request for details, that this bird was shot from some sedges at the side of a pond in front of the house at the place above mentioned on Dec. 13th ult. The Rev. Frederick M. Stopford informed me that, two or three days before, he had seen a Great Titmouse dragging about a half-dead Redbreast in a fence by the roadside near Thrapston. This is by no means the first instance that has come to my knowledge of the murderous propensities of *Parus major* in severe weather.

7th. Mr. William Bazeley, of Sheep Street, Northampton, wrote, under this date, to inform me that he had recently received, for preservation, from Maidwell, a Bittern "much reduced by starvation," killed on 24th ult.

11th. A flock of about twenty Geese going over "upwards" (*i. e.* in a S.W. direction), reported by R. Cosgrave.

16th. A Swan passed high over the house "downwards" (*i. e.* to the N.E.).—R. C.

20th. Complete thaw, after more or less severe frost since 2nd inst. A lady staying with us reported having seen a large bird of prey flying over our pleasure-grounds early this morning, with such detail as to leave no doubt in my mind of its being a Rough-legged Buzzard.

23rd. I received from Mr. H. Field, of Kettering, a bad skin of a male Red-breasted Merganser (*cf.* Zool. April 21st, 1890), and, for identification, a skin of Knot: this latter bird, as Mr. Field informs me, was picked up on Dec. 5th ult., near a brook on the north side of Kettering, by a man who had picked up another (?), in the same spot, eleven years ago.

24th. Song Thrushes in full song. S.W. wind with much rain.

26th. One of our gamekeepers reports that many of our Partridges are paired.

27th. I received as a present from Mr. Robert Whitworth, of Houghton Mills, Northampton, a stuffed specimen of Arctic Skua, *Lestris crepidatus*, with the information that he shot the bird in that neighbourhood on Oct. 14th ult. My son reported about a hundred Mallard, eighteen or twenty Wild Geese, a small bunch of Teal, and a small trip of Golden Plovers on the flooded meadows below Thrapston. The Rev. E. Moore reported thirty or forty Wild Geese as having been seen at Biggin, near Oundle.

Jan. 30th. Our shooting party saw a solitary Curlew on ploughed land near Achurch. Many Curlews pass up and down our valley in autumn and spring, but I do not remember to have previously heard of one in this neighbourhood at this time of year.

FEBRUARY.

5th. The decoyman reports a pair of Pintails on the decoy-pool. An adult male Common Pochard shot by my son, and a male Tufted Pochard by a gamekeeper on the river.

6th. A very beautiful adult male Sparrowhawk managed to get through the wire-netting at top of our pheasant-pens; it was brought to me alive, apparently quite uninjured, and restored to freedom at my window.

10th. I received from Mr. Matthews, taxidermist, of Stamford, a female Hen Harrier, stuffed by him, and killed about the middle of November last by one of Lord Exeter's gamekeepers in Collyweston wood: this functionary subsequently informed me that the bird was eating a rabbit when he killed it, but that "its principal food was Partridges, and its flight was almost like the Common Owl."

11th. I this day received, as a present from Mr. Ralph Nevile, the only Northamptonshire specimen of Golden Eagle that I have ever heard of. This bird is, I should say, in the plumage of its second year; it was killed in October, 1849, by one John Barratt, in the "High Woods" between Burghley House and Walcot, the seat of Mr. R. Nevile, and was stuffed and mounted by Mr. Evans, taxidermist, of Bourne, Lincolnshire.

12th. A male Pochard appeared on our park pond.

13th. A very fine Canada Gander, one of several of this species that have been haunting our meadows for some time, was killed by a farmer on an estate adjoining Lilford, and sent, at my request, to me for inspection. These birds are wanderers from Blatherwycke, the seat of Mr. O'Brien (*cf.* Zool. 1891, pp. 45, 46).

16th. I received a pair of Pintails, in the flesh, from the Pea-kirk decoy. A pair of Stock Doves were finishing a nest in an elm tree near the boat-house, Lilford. I received from Peterborough a stuffed Oystercatcher, killed on 2nd inst. at Stanground.

18th. I heard from Mr. W. Bazeley that he had just received, for preservation, a female Goosander, shot at Ravensthorpe reservoir. This specimen was most kindly presented to me in April by Mr. J. Eunson.

23rd. Sixteen degrees of frost registered at daylight. The decoyman brought in four Wigeon, and reports having left two of this species, about forty Mallards, a male Gadwall, and three Pochards on the pool.

24th. Twenty-three Golden Plovers seen on Wadenhoe this morning by D. M.

27th. I heard from Mr. H. Field that a Sea Eagle had been shot at Oakley on the evening of 24th inst., and sent to him the

next day for preservation. I sent a competent person over to Kettering at once to make enquiry about this bird, and obtained the following details:—It was shot by a man in the employ of Mr. Northen, tenant of Oakley Lodge, who had noticed it about all the afternoon of 24th inst. "Through the dense fog, it did not go away far; so he sent one of his men across the field gently, as the bird could see him, and he crept up close to it under the hedge, so shot it through the neck, and broke one wing." This bird, as Mr. Field informed me, was a female, and measured 3 ft. 4 in. in total length, 8 ft. in expanse of wings, and weighed about 8 lbs. It was eventually obtained for preservation by Sir R. de Capel Brooke, the owner of the farm upon which it was "done to death."

MARCH.

4th. Female Pintail on our decoy.

11th. Two Stock Doves' nests in the park with eggs.

16th. I heard from Mr. J. Evans, of Bourne, that he had received, for preservation, on June 13th ult., in the flesh, a male Honey Buzzard, killed by one of the gamekeepers at Milton, near Peterborough. This specimen is now in the Peterborough Museum.

23rd. Under this date, Mr. H. O'Brien wrote from Blatherwycke, "I saw four Great Crested Grebes on our pond to-day, and think that this must be their first appearance since the great frost."

26th. Having been informed by Mr. W. Tomalin of the occurrence of a Honey Buzzard near Syresham in 1874, I wrote for particulars of the occurrence to the woodman named to me by Mr. Tomalin, and to-day received the following reply:—"Salcey Forest, March 25. I beg to say, in answer to your letter, that the Honey Buzzard was pulled out by me in the Crown Woods, near Silverstone, in this county, in September, 1861. On seeing the wasps unusually busy one morning about 8 o'clock, I went near the nest to ascertain the cause. The whole of the combs were scratched out, and there was a hole nearly the size of a beehive. On seeing the tail of a bird, I put my arm in, and drew out what proved to be a very fine specimen of the Honey Buzzard. I sent the bird to a man named Dickins for preservation, but having been badly stuffed, after about ten years it crumbled to

pieces. To prove the date, I enclose the receipt for stuffing.—
THOMAS GULLIVER, Crown Woodman."

27th. A pair of Goosanders observed upon Ravensthorpe reservoir, *fide* Mr. J. Eunson.

31st. First batch of Peewit's eggs of the season brought in.

APRIL.

4th. Large flocks of Fieldfares and some Redwings passing to the northward.

5th. I heard from Mr. W. Tomalin that a male Red-throated Diver was killed at Woodford Mill on 24th ult.

6th. Under this date, Mr. W. Bazeley wrote to me, enclosing the following notes of occurrence of various birds in the county of Northampton, most, if not all, of which had come into his hands:—"Storm Petrel caught by a cat at Weston Favell, Dec. 3rd, 1889; Mr. Shipley." I subsequently purchased this specimen from Mr. Bazeley, and found that it was a Fork-tailed Petrel, *Procellaria leucorrhoa*. "Manx Shearwater, Hackleton; L. Tysoe, Aug. 24th, 1884." "Little Auk, picked up in a garden, Stow Nine-churches; S. Eales, Nov. 15th, 1884." "Puffin (immature), Thornby; Mr. Fasen, Dec. 12th, 1883." This bird, which was recorded in the local newspaper, and originally reported to me as a Little Auk, was sent to me for identification on Jan. 29th, 1884 (*cf.* Zool. 1884, p. 193). "Greenshank, Whilton; John Blencoe, Dec., 1885." I purchased this specimen from Mr. Bazeley; it is, to the best of my knowledge, the only Northamptonshire specimen that has been preserved of this species, which is of very uncommon occurrence in our county." "Puffin, immature, Snelson; no date." "Large (?) Black-backed Gull, Brampton; Mr. Saunders, no date." "Manx Shearwater, Heyford; S. Ales, picked up in a farrier's yard, Dec. 29th, 1883." I quote the above extracts from Mr. Bazeley's notes *verbatim*, but cannot answer for correct identification, except in the instances above specified as having come into my hands.

9th. Eight Wigeon reported as still lingering on our decoy-pool.

10th. Large flock of Siskins haunting the alders about Lilford bridges. A female Tufted Pochard is frequenting our park-pond.

19th. R. C. informed me that one evening lately his attention was called by some village lads to what appeared to be a "cluster

of rats" in a tall bush in a lane-fence close to Pilton. He stirred up this "cluster," and found that it was composed of some fifty or more Long-tailed Tits. This is by no means the first occurrence of this kind that has come to my knowledge in our neighbourhood; but in my experience these closely-packed congregations have been generally met with in the depth of winter.

MAY.

8th. About a dozen Fieldfares seen at Tichmarsh.

18th. A Jack Snipe seen near Warmington Mill by Mr. J. Crisp.

JUNE.

19th. I received a letter from Capt. J. B. Maunsell Tibbits, in which he informed me that a pair of Ring Ouzels were haunting his garden at Rothwell Grange. I may mention that, although I have no positive record of the nesting of this species in our county in my lifetime, Morton, in his 'Natural History of Northamptonshire' (1712), states with reference to the Ring Ouzel, "With us it has bred in bushes on the sides of a pretty steep valley between Clipston and Marston, in Clipston Lordship." And I have strong presumptive evidence of its having bred in the county besides that afforded by the presence of a pair of these birds at Rothwell at this season.

25th. Four male Teal, in full plumage, dropped on to our aviary-pond, but only remained for a few hours.

26th. Four young Pied Woodpeckers were brought to me from a hole in a tall oak on the property of one of my neighbours. These birds fed well, and appeared to thrive for a few weeks, but one after another began to droop, and all four were set at liberty. I have good reason to believe that all recovered their health and strength.

JULY.

3rd. Mr. W. Tomalin informed me by letter that on this day, whilst fishing near Ringstead, he twice saw, and clearly identified, four Curlew Sandpipers.

10th. I received, for identification, two fresh unblown eggs of Great Crested Grebe, taken at Ravensthorpe Reservoir, from Mr. J. Eunson. These are the first Northamptonshire eggs of this species that I have handled, though I was previously well aware of the breeding of this Grebe in our county.

16th. First report of Snipe since April last.

26th. First report of Green Sandpipers; two seen near Thorpe Station.

AUGUST.

4th. One of our gamekeepers shot a very fine adult female Lesser Black-backed Gull from a lot of four flying over Lilford Wood.

5th. I received as a present from Mrs. Tryon, of Bulwick, a stuffed specimen of White-tailed Eagle, immature. I have never been able to obtain even an approximate date of the occurrence of this Eagle which was killed near Bulwick; but it was certainly stuffed, cased, and on view in a passage at Bulwick House in 1848.

10th. Two Peregrines "toying," and screaming high in air, over Lilford Lynches.

11th. An immature female Shoveller dropped in, and was caught, at the decoy.

15th. A Jack Snipe seen on Thorpe Bogs by one of our gamekeepers, on whose accuracy I can implicitly rely. The earliest previous record of the appearance of a "Jack" in our neighbourhood that I can find in my note-books is that of one killed by myself in shooting a Partridge on Sept. 7th, 1852; my Partridge fell dead on a railway embankment, and on going to pick it up I found this Jack Snipe stone-dead within a few inches of it.

16th. Two Teal dropped on to the decoy-pool. I only record this because it bears out my experience that the first autumnal appearance of the Peregrine in our neighbourhood is either heralded, or very soon succeeded, by that of Teal.

22nd. Two "cream-coloured" Wagtails in front of the house at Lilford.—R. C. A young Corncrake was caught yesterday at the decoy by a dog, uninjured, and put into the aviary. I mention this because I am glad to add that this bird has survived the severe winter, and is—at this time of writing (April 14th, 1892)—perfectly healthy, very tame, and, as I am assured, beginning to "crake."

24th. I received an immature stuffed specimen of Buffon's Skua, from Mr. J. Cox, of Overstone Rectory farm, with the information that it was picked up dead there on Oct. 12th, 1883.

29th. A Manx Shearwater was picked up alive at Harlestone

(W. Bazeley). The same informant tells me that he had also received a young male Cormorant, killed at Naseby on 27th inst.

SEPTEMBER.

10th. First appearance of Grey Wagtail reported. This is an unusually late date for this bird here.

18th. I observed two Common Terns about the river near the house: one of these birds was vigorously chased and twice turned down wind by a Rook, but shook off that pursuer, and passed our boat for the third time, with only a few Swallows and Martins in close attendance; again it turned down wind, but returned after a few minutes with three Wood Pigeons following, and apparently much interested in its travels.

21st. I did not hear till to-day of the passage southwards of a flight of Wild Geese on 12th inst.

25th. First Grey Crow and Whimbrels of season heard by me. My son assured me of having seen a few Fieldfares and some Golden Plovers on Tichmarsh.

29th. I heard to-day from Mr. P. Mitchell, of Cranford, that a Hoopoe was killed at Burton Latimer on 22nd inst.

OCTOBER.

5th. I noticed a Reed Warbler by the riverside. This is, in my experience, a very unusually late date for this species in this neighbourhood.

6th. I received, for identification, a young Nightjar, in the flesh, shot near Stoke Albany. This also is an unusually tardy lingerer in this county.

7th. I heard the first Redwing of the season, and the decoyman reported the first appearance of Wigeon on the decoy.

15th. Mr. W. Bazeley came to Lilford, and was good enough to present me with a Fork-tailed Petrel, in the flesh, with the information that it was picked up alive yesterday near Pitsford.

19th. The Rev. Horace Waller, under this date, wrote, "We had a lovely white House Martin flying about the village of Twywell last week.

20th. The decoyman brought me a Long-eared Owl alive and uninjured, and told me that he had found it hanging on one of his pipe-nets. This species, though by no means uncommon in certain parts of Northamptonshire, is a rare bird about Lilford.

I set this individual at liberty a few days after its capture, and have heard no more of it.

25th. Our meadows are all flooded, and I am told of "vast flocks" of Peewits frequenting them.

28th. A considerable flock of Brown-headed Gulls reported by my son and Lieut.-Col. Irby about Pilton and Thorpe. The decoyman told me of having about 500 "fowl"—Mallard, Pintails, Shovellers, Teal, Wigeon, and Pochard on the decoy-pool, but that his intended "drive" for them was spoiled by the firing of a gun at a short distance by a bird-scarer who, as my informant put it, "flushed the decoy."

29th. First report of Woodcock, about ten days later than the average date for first autumnal appearance of this bird with us. Six Goldeneyes seen on the river below Lilford by R. C.

NOVEMBER.

1st, 2nd and 3rd. Large numbers of Swallows and Martins flocking about the house at Lilford.

4th. I received an immature male of Great Crested Grebe from Lady Mary Thompson, with the information that it was killed yesterday at Milton.

5th. Three Goldeneyes dropped on to the park-pond.—R. C.

7th. Our butler told me that, observing his cat in pursuit of a bird in his garden at Thorpe, he joined her, and found that she was stealing up to a Fork-tailed Petrel, which on his approach managed to rise and fly over the garden-fence, and was no more seen.

19th. Several Swallows and eighteen House Martins about the house at Lilford. This is the last record in my journals for the year of the appearance of the former species, but some half-dozen of the latter lingered with us till the 21st inst., on which day one was picked up dead and a few others seen on wing.

24th. Thirty-seven Mallard, twenty-nine Teal, and one Wigeon taken at the decoy. The decoyman assures me that after the drive in which he took these "fowl," he left fifty Mallard, eight Pintails, four Shovellers, and twenty Teal on the pool.

28th. A female Pintail caught on the decoy.

29th. Two Pintails on the park-ponds at Lilford.

DECEMBER.

4th. My Goshawk "Barbara" suddenly turned from a rabbit that she had all but overtaken, and captured an adventurous Barn Owl that was taking its pleasure abroad in full daylight. The falconer, to my regret, could not "make in" quickly enough to save this ill-advised bird of night.

8th. A very large flock of travelling Wood Pigeons passed over the house here this morning in a southerly direction.

12th. Lady Lilford reported having seen a large bird pass the house this morning, hotly pursued by a number of Rooks. From the description and circumstance, I feel convinced that this was a Rough-legged Buzzard.

30th. Several members of a shooting party, on my neighbour Mr. Freeman's property at Clapton, assured me that "a Tern" flew over their heads to-day. A fierce westerly gale sprang up at sunset.

I append a record of first appearances of vernal migrants in our county for 1891, as reported to me on good authority. In the instances in which there is no special locality noted the observations were made at Lilford:—March 17th, Curlew; 24th, Chiffchaff; 25th, Woodcock; 26th, Wheatear (Duston); 29th, Nightingale (Delapre). April 1st, Bank Martin; 10th, Redshank; 13th, Merlin; 14th, Swallow; 15th, Wryneck; 16th, Tree Pipit, Green Sandpiper, Jack Snipe; 17th, House Martin, Willow Wren; 18th, Redstart, Ray's Wagtail, Blackcap; 21st, Cuckoo; 26th, Whinchat; Whitethroat, Turtle Dove; 29th, Lesser White-throat, Sedge Warbler. May 1st, Common Sandpiper, Ring Ouzel (Rothwell); 2nd, Corncrake; 3rd, Spotted Flycatcher; 5th, Wood Warbler; 6th, Reed Warbler; 8th, Swift; 14th, Garden Warbler, Nightjar; 18th, Red-backed Shrike; 25th, Hobby.

ON THE HERPETOLOGY OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF BADEN.

By G. NORMAN DOUGLASS.

(Continued from p. 19.)

III. Fam. PELOBATIDÆ.

P. fuscus, Laur.—A comparatively rare batrachian, of nocturnal and secluded habits. I have never had the fortune to come across it during its sojourn in the water, or to discover the large larvæ in any of the ponds annually visited.

The sole locality as yet cited for its occurrence in the Grand Duchy is Mannheim (Nüsslin).

The absence of this species in Switzerland may account for the fact that it has not been observed in the southern parts of the Duchy, but as it has been found at various points of the east, north, and west of Baden, sometimes not far from the frontier, it will probably turn up eventually in the northern or north-eastern districts.

IV. Fam. HYLIDÆ.

H. arborea, L.—This species is not rare along the Rhine, though more frequently heard than seen. Near Karlsruhe there is only a limited, always decreasing, number of localities convenient for hybernating and depositing the spawn, and since a favourite piece of marshy ground, at the N.W. extremity of the "Exercierplatz" has been drained, the numbers of this frog have suffered a perceptible decrease. In the course of four summers I have only come across some four to six specimens—a very poor average in comparison with most parts of Germany. Round the shores of Lake Constance it is commoner, and also, I believe, in the south-western portions of the Grand Duchy. It prefers the level country to the hills, and is not found at anything like the elevation at which it occurs in the Tyrol and Switzerland (3000–4000 ft.).

The action of the chromatophores is very rapid with this batrachian, and experiments have proved the remarkable susceptibility of the eye to colour, enabling it to assume a protective resemblance in brief time. Thus it becomes brown on the ground, mottled on trunks of trees, &c.

In a stone-quarry near Cette (S. France) I was struck by a *Hyla* whose upper surfaces, of a rich gold colour with small, darker speckles, were wonderfully adapted to the limestone block on which it was sitting. Curious to say, another one, on a rock of the same colour, was of the usual rich green tint. I presume the eyes of the latter were shut at the time, and the adjustment of the colour therefore impossible.

It is also sensitive to atmospheric changes, and more so to moisture and dryness than to actual heat or cold. An individual brought from the Rhine-woods one afternoon to the drier air of the capital changed the same evening to a dark green; next day the colour was grey with small light spots, and afterwards it became dark brown with yellow blotches. The skin had also become rough and leathery—a condition which might be taken to indicate complete prostration of the nervous system, and a temporary reversion to ancestral colours. During a rainy night it changed to its original smooth green appearance.

Such observations will have been made by everyone who has kept this species in confinement, but they lose some of their value when it is remembered that the colour is equally affected by desquamation, change or lack of food, light, mental depression and ill-health of every sort, and that, besides, different individuals vary in this respect. Hence it is generally impossible to decide to what influence the change of colour, in most instances, is due. To obtain anything more than a superficial knowledge of the action of these different agents would require a long series of experiments, pursued on a more systematic basis than has hitherto been attempted.

V. Fam. DISCOGLOSSIDÆ.

1. *Alytes obstetricans*, Laur.—This is most probably a French immigrant. It was first observed in the western districts of Germany (Lower and Middle Rhine, Westphalia, Eifel, Nassau, valleys of the Moselle, Saar, Nahe and Lahn), but is now being discovered in various Central and Northern parts of the country (Hartz Mountains, Brunswick, Hanover).

Its distribution in Baden is not determined as yet. Bonaparte notes its occurrence at Mannheim, Nüsslin at Freiburg. If it reached this point from the northern cantons of Switzerland, as is quite likely considering its abundance there, there is reason

to expect that it will be found in other parts of the Grand Duchy in course of time. For it is only natural that all rarer species should first be signalled from the neighbourhood of University or other large towns—such as Freiburg, Bonn, Berlin, Strassburg—on account of the larger number of collectors and students living there.

I have heard the flute-like notes of *Alytes* in the vineyards near Oberschaffhausen (Kaiserstuhl), but not near Karlsruhe. At the Laacher See, in the Eifel, I searched in vain for it under blocks of lava, &c., but the season (first week of April) may have been too early for this locality.

2. *Bombinator bombinus*, L. — Universally distributed in Baden and the Bavarian Palatinate, and common enough near Karlsruhe (Wildpark, Durlacher Wald, &c.), as well as in all the ditches—muddy by preference—on the level ground and hills. At Eggenstein it occurs in the same locality with *Bufo vulgaris*, *Rana arvalis*, *fusca*, and *esculenta*.

I mention this because I have twice had an opportunity of noticing that where the area is more restricted and there are several unconnected ponds, the last-named frog and *B. bombinus* keep apart, as though disliking each other's company. They certainly occur promiscuously where there is no choice; but judging also by other facts, this enmity may be due to the acrid secretion in the skin of one species being distasteful to the other.

This fluid, with *B. bombinus*, is developed chiefly on the lower surfaces, and connected with the bright warning colour which the animal takes care to display by turning over on its back. This curious habit seems to have been accidentally acquired, perhaps from hurrying and stumbling when pursued, and, pending its general adoption, that part of the body, to judge by the colour of the young, has been rendered more conspicuous. Conversely, the upper parts are tending to lose their darker markings; for, when it thinks itself unseen, it will sit motionless, only showing the back, the colour of which is highly protective.

Many of these attitudes, originally merely the result of fright, have been gradually improved upon, and pass imperceptibly into those of feigning death. Some batrachians, on being alarmed, suddenly draw in all their legs, presumably to present the appearance of an inanimate object; others heighten the effect by

assuming curious contortions, like many newts and the species in question, and can be observed to bend their spine inwards, covering their eyes with their feet.*

From this class of devices the transition to those directly calculated to inspire terror is again so gradual that it is often difficult (for us) to decide what impression some of them are intended to convey. Examples of this method are comparatively rare among the Amphibia. I will only refer to *Rana arvalis*, which, more than the other frogs, is fond of inflating itself with air, no doubt in the hope of imposing by its size. Judging by a large number of individuals, I gather that the females are more addicted to this habit.

It is doubtful whether *B. igneus*, Laur., will ever be found in Baden. "It is certainly absent in the whole river-system of the Rhine above Bonn, and its existence on the lower Rhine is still very doubtful, whereas *B. bombinus*, this "typical mountain form, appears solely as perpetual resident of the plain in the upper valley of the Rhine (*i. e.* Baden), and seems here to take the place of *B. igneus*" (Wolterstorff, 1890).

Order II. URODELA.—Fam. TRITONIDÆ.

1. *T. cristatus*, Laur. (*cuclocephalus*, Fatio).—"Generally distributed, but not common," is said of this newt in most local faunas of Germany. The same applies to Baden. I have been informed of its occurrence in most parts of the country, except the higher ground of the Black Forest, but never in great numbers. At Karlsruhe a pair or two may usually be seen in a pond near the entrance of the Wildpark, where I have obtained pretty specimens of the *carnifex* stage: I have caught it in other ponds there, in the Durlacher Wald and various places. In the Palatinate it is considered "not very abundant."

The conditions of the country seem suitable to *cristatus*, and it attains full size (16 cm.) and bright colours. I have observed a

* "Comme pour ne point voir le danger," says Fatio. Or perhaps to conceal their brilliancy? It would be impossible to overrate the importance of such an item, considering the enemies with which many protective species have to deal. The Woodcock, for instance, is often betrayed solely by its eyes. Darwin's Patagonian lizard, "when frightened, flattened its body, closed its eyes, and then from its mottled tints was hardly distinguishable from the surrounding sand." But this movement may be purely instinctive.

slight tendency towards greenish tints in the spring costume of the male, but otherwise the coloration has always been normal. The crest varies individually in height, and by far the finest I have seen in this respect were caught in the so-called "Badloch," on the Kaiserstuhl.*

These crests are sometimes jagged and torn, perhaps from passing through the branches of brambles, &c. (such as often obstruct ponds), where they must be rather a hindrance.

But I am told they are useful as a protection against pike and other fish, which dislike the look of the serrated edge. A somewhat similar instance is that of the male Minnow enjoying a temporary immunity, as I am assured, from the attacks of larger fish, which perhaps have unpleasant recollections of the Stickleback, and are suspicious, at this season, of the family (?) likeness. I have not settled either of these points to my own satisfaction, but analogous examples show that many ornamental characters would not be so highly developed unless serving, at the same time, for practical purposes.

This applies to the ocelli of certain butterflies ('Tropical Nature,' 1st ed. p. 202), to the horns of stags, rattle of the Rattlesnake, and other structures; as well as to many of the secreting glands in various classes of animals. The voice, too, is generally of use in more ways than one, though, as we descend the scale, its functions and expressions naturally become less complex. It is absent, as a rule, among reptiles. Still there are exceptions, and J. v. Fischer, writing of that of the Gecko, distinguishes between the (original?) call-note heard during the breeding season and the other tones employed under the influence of fright, pain, or anger. The South European *Tropidosaura* is likewise gifted with a powerful voice, the possession of which would seem hardly advantageous to an animal of its habits, did we not know, on the authority of the same writer, that its arch-enemy, *Coronella girondica*, "lets it drop on the first scream."

* I cannot sufficiently recommend this locality to the notice of the many English naturalists who pass through Freiburg. For mineralogists it is probably unique, and without mentioning any of its special attractions, I may refer them to Prof. Knop, of Karlsruhe, who has visited this district annually for the past twenty-six years, and is most obliging in giving information of all sorts. Owing to its peculiar soil and situation, the plant and insect life are also highly interesting.

No wonder that, until observations such as this are forthcoming, the utility of certain characters is frequently called into question.

2. *T. palmatus*, Schneider.—Doubtless more widely diffused than is at present known. The localities already given for Baden are Heidelberg, Herrenwies, Mummelsee, and Freiburg; to which I can add Rippoldsau, and Allerheiligen, both in the Northern Schwarzwald, and well known to tourists. At the latter place I obtained great numbers in a small rill near the Convent, together, in about equal proportions, with *T. alpestris*. I also captured *palmatus* in the Glottenthal near Freiburg, in the same pond with *T. tæniatus* and *cristatus*, but nowhere in the Rhine Valley, nor yet at Grünwettersbach on the hills near Karlsruhe, where it is said to be found.

Coloration and size of Baden specimens agree with those from other parts of the Continent. The length never exceeds 10 cm., generally ranging between 6—8 cm. The females (from the same localities) vary in ground-colour from dark brown to greyish green; in a single case the under surfaces were pure white, instead of yellow.

During the summer months this sex bears such a close resemblance, in its obscure tint and emaciated condition, to others of *T. tæniatus*, that it is well to remember that the absence of pigment on the throats affords, as Mr. Boulenger has pointed out, the easiest criterion of its identity.

Having occasion to keep large numbers of this species in confinement, I was able to corroborate what others have observed with respect to its voice. This consists in a short, 'abrupt tone, but whether it is produced under the water or on coming to the surface to breathe, I could not say, as the animals were purposely kept out of the light.

The distribution of this species in Germany has been dealt with in a special enquiry by Prof. Leydig, to which I may refer those who are interested in the subject ('*Triton helveticus und Rana agilis*.' Würzburg, 1888).

3. *T. tæniatus*, Schneider.—This newt is about as common as the next species; for though not occurring, like it, on the highest points of the Schwarzwald, it is more abundant near the Rhine. No doubt its numbers here are kept down, to some extent, by a variety of enemies, preying chiefly upon the larvæ.

On the Kaiserstuhl, it is found near the "Badloch," inhabiting the tepid water which issues from the small excavation there.

In the Palatinate it is as generally distributed as in Baden.

With respect to coloration, I have only noted one male, from Karlsruhe, as peculiar in possessing two perfectly symmetrical rows of spots on the lower surfaces, instead of the irregular black blotches. The five converging stripes on the head show an interesting tendency to unite, recede towards the parotides and form an almost vertical pattern. This manner of development has many analogies in the animal kingdom, to which I hope to recur elsewhere at more length. The young, generally to be found under stones and such like, display a great variety of fundamental tints, from light brick-red to the darkest brown.

The proportion of the sexes seems less equal than with *T. alpestris*; at least, one often sees several males of this newt courting one female, whereas *alpestris* is, as a rule, to be found in pairs.

4. *T. alpestris*, Laur.—It will have struck anyone who has examined the fauna of Karlsruhe during the last few years that this newt has become more common, while *taniatus* has proportionately decreased.

It is interesting to observe this tendency towards mutual exclusion, but we are generally at a loss to conjecture in what the advantages may consist which decide the day; for to attribute the ultimate victory of one of the contending parties to "greater flexibility of constitution, &c.," is doubtless true of most cases, though it contains little more than a re-statement of the fact. The context waxes hottest between those whom a physical similarity—relationship, in most cases—involves in the only too natural warfare; whether they be genera and genera, species and species,* or the variety and individuals of one species respectively. Whatever may be the cause of the displacement

* To the large list of analogous observations among birds I may be permitted to add two more examples. Within recent years, *Phylloscopus trochilus*, at one time very abundant near Karlsruhe, has been completely replaced by *P. sibilatrix*, so that these two now occur in exactly inverse proportions. Similarly, *Parus cæruleus* is increasing rapidly, whereas *P. cristatus* becomes rarer every day. In explaining the last case, no doubt the more enterprising disposition of *cæruleus*—witness the social success of the Sparrow—must be taken into account.

here, it is evident that *alpestris* possesses some capabilities enabling it successfully to invade a region to which it is not entitled by name.

I have missed this newt in the immediate vicinity of the Rhine, but, with this exception, have found it at every level up to the summit of the Feldberg. In the Alps it occurs at a still higher elevation, as I caught one in some water near the top of the Splügen Pass (Fatio gives "about 2500 mètres," Gredler 6500 (German) feet as the highest point of its occurrence). It is found throughout Germany, though sometimes not abundantly.

I have observed nothing remarkable about the colour of Baden specimens, except that the throat in some, perhaps younger, males, is as much spotted as with the females; but there are one or two other points I should like to notice.

In the first place, one may come across (in summer) specimens of *alpestris* whose eyes are devoured by the larvæ of some fly, probably *Lucilia sylvarum*, Meig. (Zool. Anzeiger, 1891, p. 455). It would be interesting to know whether the other newts are free from this parasite, and why, if this is due to their more aquatic life, some terrestrial batrachians, such as *Rana fusca*, appear equally exempt from its attacks.

Again, I once caught a female of this species, near Karlsruhe, with as distinct a crest as the male. This is a pretty frequent phenomenon among some mammalia and birds, but I only recollect one other instance with the *Urodela* (Leydig, 'Molche d. Württ. Fauna,' p. 39), though it occurs again commonly enough among lower animals.

Further I may call attention to the fact that most European species of this order, when entering upon their land life, assume either much brighter or much duller colours. I have certainly found *T. alpestris*, in the Alps, as brilliantly coloured in August as in spring, and it was this circumstance which suggested to me the possibility that the brighter tints of others at this late season may have been developed as warning colours, while the obscurer shades of the majority are protective. Without wishing to draw a general inference from a few cases, I may note, as bearing on the point, that the Marmorated Newt, on leaving the water, becomes "much more brilliantly coloured" than before, and that a similar acquisition of brighter tints takes place with the young Salamander (cf. also *Chioglossa lusitanica*) on definitely quitting

this element. The vivid hues of *Bufo variabilis* are not, as might be supposed, characteristic of the breeding season, but are only acquired later—"variabilis"—on the land; and it may be worth mentioning that the exceptionally acrid fluid in the skin of this species is, as with *S. maculosa*, confined, like the colour, to the upper surfaces. At all events, I venture to think that, in view of the increased interest now taken in questions of colour, this point is deserving of notice.

II. Fam. SALAMANDRA.

1. *S. maculosa*, Laur.—Plentiful throughout the whole length of the Grand Duchy, except in the woods of the Rhine Valley, where, to the best of my knowledge, it never occurs. I have obtained it in numbers from the wooded hills near Karlsruhe (Rittner-wald, Ettlingen), and throughout the Northern Black Forest. It seems here more abundant—especially in the Murg Valley—than in the southern and higher districts of the Feldberg. Often, as with *S. atra*, one finds large companies collected together at one point, and may then walk a long way before seeing another specimen. This comes, I fancy, from their all having crawled out of the same retreat prior to separating in different directions, and not from any gregarious or patriarchal disposition. I have not met with this species on the Kaiserstuhl, where several peasants assured me of its existence. This would be an interesting point to determine, as implying an emigration from the Schwarzwald across a stretch of level country; unless, indeed, it had been purposely liberated there. It is also universally cited for the Palatinate, but must be considerably rarer than in Baden, as I never saw it in any part of the country, in spite of the most propitious weather (five days of uninterrupted rain). It occurs throughout Germany in suitable localities, *i. e.*, damp and wooded hills, avoiding the cultivated plain and vineyards.

Baden specimens frequently attain the unusual length of 20 cm. The yellow of the spots varies in intensity between light lemon and dark orange. It has been observed that the exclusion of light renders these markings paler and less clearly defined, but there are individual variations irrespective of this cause. The fundamental tint is also of different shades from dark brown to bluish black. The markings seldom develop into the cross-

barred pattern, commoner with southern forms, but tend rather to become longitudinally confluent along the back. Very pretty specimens of this type may be found, though the continuity of the lines is broken on the tail.

I have never come across the Salamander after the beginning of October, and only once succeeded in unearthing three individuals, in close proximity to each other, during the winter. The coloration was as bright as in summer, and they were not long in regaining their habitual liveliness. My earliest date for their spring appearance is the first week of April.

It is a singular fact that the young of a certain size—from 5 to 10 cm.—appear to be much rarer than the adults, and I do not know that anyone has ventured an explanation of this. Is it that their habits are more nocturnal?

The larvæ are extremely abundant in all the shaded streams and springs of the hills. While they are being deposited, the females are sometimes carried away by the current, a misfortune which may entail disastrous consequences, unless they are drifted ashore again by a kindly wave. Similar accidents may take place during their summer rambles, if they happen to step into a half-empty cattle-trough or other hopeless situations. I have discovered *S. atra* in the same predicament, feebly struggling to keep its head above water.

Some of these larvæ are very light-coloured, in fact, almost white and transparent. Their egg, however, is always furnished with colouring matter. This paleness is probably the result of deficient nourishment, as has been experimentally shown by Fatio ('Faune des Vertèbres de la Suisse,' p. 579) in the instance of *Triton palmatus*. But these larvæ of *Salamandra* are no doubt constitutionally weaker, and must stand a poor chance of surviving and regaining their strength, in view of the severe struggle for existence among them.

Triton alpestris has been observed "more or less albinotic" in alpine lakes, but, from my experience, the light appearance of some of these newts in the water is due to the semi-detached and translucent epidermis.

Among reptiles and batrachians in general the tendency to this condition is comparatively rare: cases have been recorded with *Coronella lævis* (2), *Elaphis flavescens*, *Tropidonotus natrix* (2), *T. tessellatus*; *Alytes obstetricans*, *Bombinator bombinus*, *Hyla*

arborea, *Rana fusca*, *Salamandrina perspicillata*, *Triton cristatus* [?], and doubtless several more.*

White coloration is not, *eo ipso*, a pathological condition, unless accompanied by lack of pigment in the choroid lining and iris, which constitutes total albinism, and entails debility of various sorts. In every case its injurious effects are relative, dependent both on the climatic and social circumstances in which the affected individual is situated.

Like melanism, albinism, in so far as it denotes a diminution, however slight, local or universal, of the *normal* pigment, is due to a variety of causes. It is incidental to both sexes and all ages. Besides varying in degree, it differs also as to nature, being either temporary or permanent, congenital or acquired, sometimes hereditary, &c.,—distinctions whereby it has become entitled to various specific names. Being founded on a physiological diagnosis, these will apply equally to all species liable to the many forms of deficient pigment; but I venture to think that until some definition of the broader term "albinism" is adopted, most of the discussions on the subject will remain, so to speak, at cross purposes.

The majority of the cases above cited were *albinismus universalis*. A large proportion, nevertheless, belongs to that intermediate type, a few instances of which are on record with our own species—fair-complexioned negroes—under the name of "semi-albinism." I should retain this term in preference to "xanthous varieties," as several writers have employed the latter to designate a not *abnormal* condition (blonde type of European). Still, it is rather vague, and not as descriptive as the corresponding "phæism." *Albinismus partialis* (pied varieties), so frequent among warm-blooded animals, has not, to my knowledge, been observed with reptiles or batrachians.

I am unaware of the existence of any data showing the proportion of the sexes among albino animals, but have no hesitation in predicting that the females will be found in the

* In a paper by Dalla Torre on the 'Drachensage im Alpengebiet,' there is a note to the effect that one of these fabulous monsters, on being killed, "was found to have ten young ones in its body, one of which was quite white." Such a detail can hardly be ascribed to pure imagination, and supports the view that the origin of these myths must be sought, to a large extent, in the fauna of the country.

minority, seeing that this sex, in variability of every description, is less inclined to depart from the mean.*

2. *S. atra*, Laur. — I would not refer to this strictly alpine species, but for misleading accounts of its existence in the Schwarzwald and elsewhere, which anyone interested in the fauna of the country is sure to hear. These may be safely attributed to errors of identification with *Triton alpestris* in its terrestrial costume.

The nearest point of its occurrence on this side of the Rhine is the neighbourhood of Isny, in the extreme S.E. of Württemberg, and within the Bavarian alpine system (Leydig).

A number of specimens were liberated, in 1876 (*cf.* Zeitschrift für Wiss. Zoologie), near Wildbad and Freiburg, in the Black Forest, but nothing more has been heard of them.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

MAMMALIA.

Badgers near Scarborough.—On April 15th a pair of Badgers were captured alive at Flixton, a small village on the Yorkshire Wolds, some six miles from Scarborough. On digging down to the nest a mass of moss and dry grass sufficient to fill a wheelbarrow was found, in which the Badgers were curled up asleep. Both were secured uninjured; but the male, a fine animal weighing 26 lbs., was afterwards killed, and has since been stuffed. The female has been kept alive, in the hopes of securing a litter of young ones. Whilst digging down to the nest a very perfect skull of the Badger was unearthed, which had evidently lain there a considerable time.—**WILLIAM J. CLARKE** (44, Huntriss Row, Scarborough).

Polecats at Scarborough one hundred years ago.—A friend of mine, while going through the Archives of Scarborough, a short time ago,

* Such, at least, is the result of statistics, so far as they have been published with respect to man, and my own observations agree in giving a considerable preponderance to males. This can be well seen among the manufacturing population of Lancashire, where the phenomenon is not rare, especially among children. The mortality here during growth is doubtless increased by bad nutrition, unhealthy surroundings, and overcrowding, which, besides favouring anæmia and other diseases, are not calculated to alleviate the ordinary evils associated with albinism: defective sight, photophobia, nystagmus, &c.

came across the following records, which may prove of interest to some readers of 'The Zoologist.' They form part of the Churchwardens' account against the Corporation in the year 1775, and run as follows:—

				s.	d.
1775, June 8.	Paid Sampson Thompson for 7 Foulmarts' heads	-	-	2	4
Nov. 3.	Do. Rd. Wedgewood of Falsgrave for a Foulmart's head	-	-	0	4
„ 27.	Do. John Stubley for a Foulmart's head	-	-	0	4
„ 30.	Do. do. do.	-	-	0	4
Dec. 23.	Do. do. do.	-	-	0	4
1776, Jan. 2.	Do. do. do.	-	-	0	4
Feb. 21.	Do. John Harrison for a Foulmart's head	-	-	0	4
Mar. 1.	Do. John Stubley do.	-	-	0	4
„ 21.	Do. Isaac Brown for a Weasel's head	-	-	0	2
April 2.	Do. John Stubley for a Foulmart's head	-	-	0	4
July 18.	Do. Ch. West for a Foulmart's head	-	-	0	4
Sep. 18.	Do. Guy Allison do.	-	-	0	4
Dec. 21.	Do. John Stubley for two do.	-	-	0	8

Wm. Parkin, Churchwarden, charges Corporation as follows, in 1774-5, but gives no dates:—

Paid to John Megson for six Fowmats' heads	-	-	-	2	0
„ John Taylor for 2 do.	-	-	-	0	8
„ Thos. Masters for 3 do.	-	-	-	1	0
„ Guy Allatson for a Fowmat's head	-	-	-	0	4
„ John Swift for 3 do.	-	-	-	1	0
„ John Trot for 3 do.	-	-	-	1	0

The Polecat is now very scarce in the Scarborough district, if not entirely exterminated. The last one of which I have notes was killed in Ramcliffe Wood about 1882; but owing to the stench produced by the animal, its captor left it where it was killed, and on visiting the place afterwards the body was found to have disappeared. About the same time (unfortunately I have not the exact date) I had a good view of one for about ten minutes, in a thick fir wood at Seamer Carr, near Scarborough. It was running round a small clearing in the wood, and, from its actions, appeared to have a mate close at hand.—WILLIAM J. CLARKE.

Marten and Wild Cat.—On the 12th of last March I received, in the flesh, an old male Marten. It had been caught in Cumberland on March 5th; but, owing to some delay in transit, it had been dead seven days ere it reached here,—I suppose a little "high"; but having passed the skilful hands of Mr. J. Cullingford, taxidermist, it has turned out a very good specimen of that now rare animal. I also received the skin of

a female Wild Cat, caught in Scotland on March 4th. It measures 29½ inches in length.—JAMES SUTTON (Durham).

Polecat in Northamptonshire.—As I gather from recent numbers of 'The Zoologist' that a certain interest attaches to "modern instances" of the occurrence of the Polecat in this country, I write to say that I was informed by Mr. Percy Mitchell, of Cranford Hall, near Kettering, that one was trapped there by his gamekeeper in the month of September, 1891. My falconer has just informed me that a Polecat (trapped on the property of my neighbour, Mr. Freeman, of Clapton, on Friday, April 1st) has been sent to him for preservation.—LILFORD (Lilford Hall, Oundle).

Earliest use of Foxhounds.—An earlier notice of Foxhounds than that noticed by Mr. H. A. Evans (p. 143) will be found in the 'Twelfth Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission,' Appendix, part vii. It occurs among the MS. of Sir Daniel Fleming, Bart., of Rydal. The abstract furnished is the following;—"November 17th, 1674. Newsletter 11th. On Saturday or Sunday next his Royal Highness, and the Duke of Monmouth, and divers persons of quality go to Chichester, where they are to lodge in the Bishop's Palace, and expect all the gentry of the neighbourhood to repair with their dogs for seven or eight days' fox-hunting" (p. 114).—A. H. MACPHERSON (Carlisle).

CETACEA.

Rorqual in the Humber.—On April 14th a large Rorqual, *Balenoptera musculus*, was stranded on the Den, a prominent shoal just within the Spurn. It was there killed by the life-boat crew, and subsequently towed across to the sands at Cleethorpe, on the Lincolnshire side, for exhibition, where I saw and examined it on the 16th of that month. The dimensions were:—Total length over all, 76 ft.; girth behind pectorals, 32 ft. 4 in.; gape, 15 ft. 6 in.; across tail, 15 ft. 6 in.; length of pectoral fin, 7 ft. 6 in. The baleen-plates were 18 inches in depth near the angle of the mouth and tapering towards the front, and 9 inches in width, brownish in colour towards the back of the mouth, but in front almost pure white, clouded with violet. This and the comparatively small size of the pectorals, as well as some other external features, point to the conclusion that this was the so-called Common Rorqual, and not Sibbald's Rorqual (*B. Sibbaldii*, J. E. Gray)—the only other of the *Balenopteridæ* with which it could be confused. It was sold on the coast for £75, and the skeleton will be preserved.—JOHN CORDEAUX (Eaton Hall, Retford).

BIRDS.

Plumage of the Serin Finch.—There are one or two points in connection with the winter plumage of the male Serin, *Serinus hortulanus*, on which those who have seen more specimens than I have may perhaps be

able to enlighten me. I have four males in winter plumage. "No 1" is labelled "Near Milan, November, 1891": this specimen is very brown on the head, back, wings, and flanks; the bases of the feathers on the forehead do not show much yellow, but there is a good deal of this colour on the breast. "No. 2" is labelled "N. Italy, November, 1884": this bird has got a certain amount of brown on the back and flanks, but on the whole is much yellower than "No. 1"; the edges to the wing-coverts are greener, the breast and throat bright yellow, and the bases to the feathers on the forehead are of the same colour, although this is hidden almost entirely by grey tips. "No. 3," labelled "Nice, November, 1891," is very much like "No. 2," but is altogether greyer on the upper parts, and the back shows very little brown. "No. 4," from South Spain, dated 13th November, 1890, is not unlike a bird in spring dress; the yellow is, however, less brilliant, though there is just as much of it; the line over the eye and the forehead are not in the least obscured with grey; the colour of the upper tail-coverts is practically the same in all four specimens, nor is there any material difference in the wing-quills or tails. In addition to the above, Mr. O. V. Aplin kindly sent me for comparison three male birds from his collection. These comprised a bird in full spring dress; "No. 5," labelled "Florence Market, 15th December, 1891," which may be placed in the same class as "Nos. 2 and 3"; and "No. 6," from North Italy, October, 1884, which is very much in the same dress as "No. 1." Now, on examination of the few skins at my disposal, I originally thought that birds like "No. 5" might be young; for I had a recollection of having noticed specimens like "No. 4" in Italy last winter, presumably older birds, with clear yellow foreheads. On mentioning this in a letter to Mr. Aplin, he suggested that perhaps the grey tips to the feathers on the head would be worn off before spring, which seems not unlikely to be the case. But this could hardly have occurred in "No. 4," a specimen I have only recently acquired; for this bird is dated "November," and it seems impossible for the grey edges acquired after the autumnal moult to have been lost so soon. The text-books generally state that the male in winter is duller in colouring than in spring, and that the yellow—especially on the head—is obscured by grey edges to the feathers. Mr. Dresser, in his 'Birds of Europe,' says—"Differs from the specimen in summer dress merely in having the yellow on the head obscured by greyish brown tips to the feathers; the back is less marked with yellow; and the wing-feathers have rather broader buffy white margins tinged with yellow; but the rump is as bright yellow as in the spring, if not brighter." This description applies more or less to "Nos. 2, 3, and 5"; so that we may assume, allowing a good margin for individual variation, that there are adult birds in ordinary winter dress. In the books to which I have referred there is no description of the brown dress of "Nos. 1 and 6," but presumably birds wearing it are in

their first autumn. I showed "No. 1" to Prof. Giglioli at Florence, and he expressed this view; but still this specimen and "No. 6" both show plenty of yellow, and Mr. Saunders, in his 'Manual' (p. 170), states that "the young in their first autumn exhibit hardly any yellow tint." Various other points arise as to birds like "No. 4," which retain the clear yellow forehead. Is this latter an abnormal phase, dependent on age or some other condition? Or does "No. 4" represent a normal state of plumage? and, if so, when do the birds acquire it, and through what stages do they pass in attaining it? — A. HOLTE MACPHERSON (51, Gloucester Place, Hyde Park, W.).

Nesting of the Chiffchaff.—I was much interested in reading the note on this subject by Mr. Backhouse (p. 150), and perhaps a similar instance may be worth recording. In June, 1886, there was a nest of this species in the grounds of the College of Agriculture, Downton, Salisbury, built in a yew tree near the extremity of a branch, and more than six feet from the ground. The domed nest was composed of dried grass, dead leaves, and moss, with a lining of feathers, and contained young birds. I frequently heard the note of the old bird, and when I was examining the nest the owner of it came very close to me.—CHARLES F. ARCHIBALD (Rusland Hall, Ulverston).

Woodcocks breeding in Worcestershire.—Hearing of Woodcocks breeding in one part of this county I paid the keepers a visit, one of whom had found a nest about April 16th. We went in search of it, and found that it contained four eggs. The old bird was sitting very close, and allowed us to stand watching her within a few feet, her wings trailing, tail erect, head set back with beak pointing downwards—an object not easily distinguished from the dead leaves and stumps around. The eggs were in course of hatching, and were laid—as in most cases—on the sunny side of the wood. Being referred to another man who had found a nest, we went to see that also. The bird had hatched off a few days previously, and the shells were lying around the spot. At night the number of Woodcocks in this locality might be estimated, as they fly overhead "roding" constantly. From one spot I counted seven, and this I believe is not unusual. The keepers assert that they are scarcer this year than last.—J. STEELE ELLIOTT (Park Road, Sutton Coldfield).

The Motions of Divers on Land.—It is generally stated and believed that the Divers are unable to walk on land. This is not quite correct. A few weeks ago I watched a Red-throated Diver, which was swimming in a tidal pool, walk deliberately out of the water, evidently with the intention of crossing a narrow spit of sand to the main channel of the estuary. It walked perfectly upright on its feet, in the same position as a Cormorant; but after progressing three or four yards it caught sight of me, and imme-

diately dropped down to the usual position, and shuffled back into the water. These Divers almost always rise and fly if approached by a boat, but take very little notice of a man walking on shore.—G. H. CATON HAIGH (Aber-Iâ, Penrhyndeudraeth, Merionethshire, North Wales).

Unusual Nesting-place for a Magpie.—Referring to the notes under this heading (Zool. 1891, pp. 309, 351, 353, 430), I would point out that Magpies not infrequently choose sites near the ground for their nests, notwithstanding that tall timber may be abundant all round. I know a spot, within thirty miles of London, where I have seen two nests at not more than six feet from the ground; both were in hedges on the borders of woods containing oak trees, with Magpies' nests in them. But in North Devon I found a nest the bottom of which was not more than eighteen inches from the ground, trees being abundant. I should like to hear any suggestions as to the reasons for this.—J. YOUNG (64, Hereford Road, Bayswater).

A White American Red-breasted Thrush.—In the Province of Quebec, Canada, in the spring of 1887, I saw a most interesting sight, viz. a white example of *Turdus migratorius*. It was in company with others of its own species in the neighbourhood of New Rockland and Kingsbury, Richmond county. Being at the time without a settled home, and having no collection of birds, this rare visitor was allowed to enjoy its freedom with the rest of its companions. But fortunately I had the opportunity of observing its actions for several days, and on two occasions, by making my way as noiselessly as possible through some trees behind a fence, and peering through the branches, I was able to scrutinize it at close quarters. Its feathers, with the exception of a few dark specks on the nape, were as white as the driven snow. The bill was of a dull cream-colour, and the legs and feet were of fainter hues than the usual colour of those of the family. The bird was somewhat wilder than the species usually is, more reserved with its vocal powers, and surveyed its surroundings with greater curiosity, as if it had just arrived from a cheerless region.—JOHN RIDGE (Kingsbury, Que., Canada).

Varieties of the Wild Duck.—I have two varieties of the Mallard, *Anas boscas*, both females, shot in Walney Fen, Cambs., last winter. In one of them the normal colouring is superseded by a pale buff or fawn-colour. The bill has more yellow than the type; head and upper part of neck pale buff, crown varied with brown, a triangular patch of white at the base of lower mandible; the lower part of neck has a broad collar of white; upper part of back and scapulars buff, most of the feathers, particularly the scapulars, prettily marked down the centre with blackish brown and tipped with white; the lower part of back white, varied with blackish, getting darker towards the tail, where the upper tail-coverts are almost entirely

black-brown; tail-feathers buff, with dark brown centres; small wing-coverts white, except a few in the middle and towards the greater-coverts, which are tipped with blackish brown; innermost greater-coverts purplish brown, margined with white; secondaries nearly white on the inner webs; outer webs purplish brown (forming the speculum): inner secondaries rich brown, tipped with white, the innermost one all white; primaries all white; breast above and sides clear pale buff; belly pale lemon-yellow; under tail-coverts buff; legs and feet as in the type. The other specimen has the crown of head and cheeks normal in colour; all the rest of the head and neck and base of bill white; upper part of back white; the rest of the back and scapulars normal; tail slightly pale, varied with white; point of wing normal; the rest of greater and lesser wing-coverts white, except a few of the innermost ones; secondaries white, except the two innermost, which are purple as in the type; inner secondaries normal; primaries all white; *re* secondaries, this only applies to one wing, the other has the first half purple and the rest white—reversing the order; chin and throat white; lower part of neck and breast yellowish white, with a patch of normal colour on each side near the point of wing; belly white, with a patch of normal colour each side above the legs; thighs brown; legs and feet as the type.—WM. FARREN (9, Union Road, Cambridge).

Nesting of the Black Scoter, *Oidemia nigra*, in Sussex.—Pardon my delay in reply to your queries respecting the Black Scoter in Sussex (p. 151). I have been from home. Mr. Fowler has sent me the bird, and I have it now. There is no doubt as to its being the Black Scoter, *Oidemia nigra*. He says that he saw the brood the first or second week in August, 1891. He is well known to me, and, besides being a keen sportsman, is a very observant naturalist. These are all the particulars I can give you at present; but Mr. Fowler hopes to prove beyond all doubt the truth of his communication by discovering the eggs during the coming season.—JOSEPH ANDERSON, JUN. (Hon. Curator, Chichester Museum).

Ivory Gull in Co. Dublin.—It may be of interest to some of your readers to learn that on April 19th last, while driving from the Phoenix Park to O'Connell Bridge, in Dublin, we saw an Ivory Gull, *Larus eburneus*. This bird, which attracted our attention by its pure white plumage, was feeding, among the usual throng of Common and Black-headed Gulls, on the garbage of the Liffey—the tide being low—just above Grattan Bridge, and many times flew, hovering and swooping, so close to us that the dark base of its bill was very conspicuous. So far as we could judge, it appeared on comparison the same size as the Common Gull, *L. canus*.—E. G. WADDILOVE (21, Old Square, Lincoln's Inn); S. V. COOKE (Naas).

Pied Rooks.—Nearly every season I notice one or more Pied Rooks around here. One bird in particular might almost be mistaken for a

Magpie by a casual observer. Last spring, during the annual rook-shooting season, a couple of pied "branchers" were killed, and were mounted by the city taxidermist; and lately I have noticed a pied Daw.—JAMES SUTTON (Durham).

Bitterns in South-Western Hampshire.—During last winter an unusual number of Bitterns were killed in the valley of the Avon, between Fordingbridge and Christchurch. I know of some eight or nine occurrences, and I heard of two or three others about which some doubt existed, and I extremely regret to say that more than one of the specimens were killed just for the mere act of slaughter, and were never preserved. It does seem sad that this grand species should be so ruthlessly murdered, but I suppose the fact of a large bird rising out of the reeds, and offering such a ready mark to the gunner, is a temptation that few could resist, for with many, I fear, the idea of "sport" is degraded into a desire to kill; and I am told that in many instances the Bittern seems to lack the wariness of its relation, the Heron, and that when roused, it usually rises in a somewhat lazy fashion, and often settles again at no great distance, and the following incident will prove that it will remain undisturbed sometimes in the midst of danger:—About the beginning of February a portion of the river, which is strictly preserved for water-fowl, was being shot over, guns being placed on both banks of the stream, which was rather wide, with a reed-covered island in its midst. There had been some considerable firing, and all the Wild Duck, &c., had taken wing, but it was deemed expedient to examine the island for "cripples," &c., when—to the astonishment of those who made the search—a Bittern rose from the coarse herbage, and, of course, met its fate. There it had remained through the whole of the fusilade, and doubtless would have continued in its retreat if no one had landed on the island. During the past sixteen or seventeen years I have seen a good number of specimens, and noted that the plumage differed considerably in particular individuals—attributable, no doubt, to age or sex. Such was the case with those of the past winter; the plumage of one—which I conjectured was a female—was as if the markings had been washed out, whilst another had the markings bright and well defined. The line of migration with the Bittern, as with other birds, is regulated, I suppose, by the severity or otherwise of the season, for during the severe winter of 1890–91 I did not hear of a single specimen in this neighbourhood; yet a winter seldom passes but I hear of one or more specimens in this locality or in the forest—indeed the one figured in "Yarrell" is from a New Forest bird.—G. B. CORBIN (Ringwood, Hants).

Woodchat and Bittern in Sussex.—I have to record the capture in this county of that extremely rare bird the Woodchat Shrike, *Lanius auriculatus*. The bird was shot at Fairlight, near Hastings, during the

first week of May. Mr. Borrer, in his 'Birds of Sussex,' records but one example, and the species is not noticed by Mr. Knox in his 'Ornithological Rambles in Sussex.' I have seen the bird, which is in the hands of Mr. T. Sorrell, taxidermist, of Old Humphrey's Avenue, Hastings, and it is an adult male in full plumage. Mr. Sorrell has also had a Bittern through his hands, which was killed in the early part of February of this year, close to Hellingly Station, near Hailsham.—THOMAS PARKIN (Fairseat, High Wickham, Hastings).

Cirl Bunting in Dorsetshire.—Mr. Aplin, in his paper on the Cirl Bunting in Great Britain (p. 176), quotes Mr. Mansel-Pleydell's work on Dorset Birds, in which I am reported to have shot a Cirl Bunting at Poxwell. This was a misapprehension on Mr. Mansel-Pleydell's part. I have frequently *seen* the Cirl Bunting on the road between Bloxworth and Poole, by Lytchett Minster, and (less frequently) in this more immediate neighbourhood, the last occurrence being near Bere Regis, where I watched a pair close to me for some time on the 2nd of July, 1888. The male occasionally sang a portion of the ordinary song of the Yellow Bunting, but omitted the usual plaintive coda. I never *shot* a Cirl Bunting—nor indeed ever saw one—at Poxwell, though I do not doubt but that it occurs there and at other points along the coast. In the summer of 1854 the late Mr. Frederick Bond and I obtained several nests, containing a total of ten eggs, along the coast from Weymouth to Wyke and Chickerell; and I had specimens of the bird, shot near Poole, in my collection for many years.—O. P. CAMBRIDGE (Bloxworth, Dorset).

Birds in Queen Charlotte Island, British Columbia.—Though the readers of 'The Zoologist' are, I believe, chiefly interested in the fauna of Britain, a few notes I have made during my fifteen months' residence on the birds of this locality may not be unwelcome. My attention has been confined almost entirely to land birds, and even of these I do not pretend to present a complete list, as other duties have prevented my doing more than note the birds that have come in my way. This island, I may remark, being washed by the Japan current, enjoys a climate no severer than that of Yorkshire. We are 100 miles from the mainland of British Columbia, though hills in the outlying islands of both British Columbia and Alaska are distinctly visible in clear weather, and the widest stretch of water does not exceed thirty miles. A pine forest covers the island, which is for the most part flat, though some hills in the interior reach an altitude of 1500 feet. The Raven, *Corvus corax*,* is, strange to say, our commonest bird. As I write I can see seven perched on the wooden fence surrounding my garden. They act as the village scavengers, and are as bold as London

* I adopt the nomenclature of Dr. E. Coues' 'Key to N. Am. Birds,' 2nd edition, 1884.

Sparrows. In early summer they do much mischief in the gardens, unearthing young potatoes, as Rooks do in England. Occasionally they attempt young chickens, but the commotion their presence excites in the yard usually defeats their purpose. When at rest on housetops and elsewhere they carry on a continuous chatter, accompanied with grotesque, gesticulations. They are resident throughout the year. Their near relatives, the Fish Crows, *C. caurinus*, are equally abundant, but move more in flocks, and confine themselves chiefly to the sea-shore. They are about the size of Jackdaws. The Song Sparrow, *Melospiza fasciata*, is the commonest of our smaller birds. Its song is short, but really sweet, and constitutes almost the only bird-music we enjoy. The only other songster of importance is the Wren, *Anorthura troglodytes*, whose song is indistinguishable from that of its little English relative. A walk round my garden usually calls forth the harsh scream of the Blue Jay, *Cyanocitta stelleri*, an almost black variety found on this coast; while a Golden Woodpecker, *Colaptes auratus*, rises with startling whirr from the foot of some tree, and displays the rich lining of the wings as it hurries off to the neighbouring forest. Snowbirds, *Junco hiemalis*, may always be found in the surrounding bushes, and Titmice, *Parus rufescens*, and Goldcrests, *Regulus satrapa*, in the pine branches overhead. A peep over the garden fence often reveals a Woodpecker on the tall pine trunks close by. The Downy Woodpecker, *Picus pubescens*, is the commonest, but the Hairy and Yellow-bellied, *P. villosus* and *Sphyrapicus varius*, are by no means rare. A Creeper, *Certhia familiaris*, I have only once met with. At a little pond at the bottom of my garden I can usually, on winter mornings, flush a Wilson's Snipe, *Gallinago wilsoni*. Flocks of Crossbills, *Loxia curvirostra*, with a few *L. leucoptera*, frequent the forest during the winter months. Hawks are numerous, though I have not met with many species. The Goshawk, *Astur atricapillus*, is so common an offender in the poultry yard, that I have been compelled to institute a "keeper's tree" for his special benefit. The Bald Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, constantly passes overhead, but is too busily engaged in watching the movements of the Ospreys, *Pandion haliaetus*, to stoop to poultry. As many as six or eight Ospreys may often be seen at one time hovering over a little arm of the sea close by; and the dastardly treatment these birds receive at the hands of the Bald Eagles, so graphically described by Wilson, may be witnessed almost daily during the summer. The Ospreys retire to the south in winter, and leave the Eagles to fish for themselves. In the little salt inlet just alluded to may also be seen the beautiful Blue Heron, *Ardea herodias*, wading in the shallow water; while the Belted Kingfisher, *Ceryle alcyon*, is compelled, by the absence of fresh-water streams, to seek a living in the same place. The earliest of our summer migrants are the "Robins," *Turdus migratorius*, which appear about the middle of March. They are usually accompanied

by a few Oregon "Robins," *T. navius*—easily distinguished by the dark crescent on their chestnut breasts. About the middle of April Humming-birds arrive, though an occasional one is seen earlier in the month. Two species are said to frequent this coast as far north as Alaska, but I have hitherto only met with the Red-backed species, *Selasphorus rufus*. These are very numerous, and literally swarm during the summer months round foxgloves in our garden. They leave us quite simultaneously about the end of July. May brings the Swallows—the Barn Swallow, *Hirundo horreorum*, and White-bellied Swallow, *H. bicolor*—both of which breed under the eaves of the houses here. None were seen this year later than the end of August. Other summer visitors are the Olive-backed Thrushes, *Turdus ustulatus*, which, though very numerous, arrive late and leave early; Townsend's Warbler, *Dendroica townsendi*; Summer Warbler, *D. aestiva*; and a Flycatcher, *Empidonax* sp., which I have not yet identified. The inlets along the coast swarm with ducks of many species, with which may be observed Cormorants, Divers, and occasionally Swans, Canada Geese, *Bernicla canadensis*, pass overhead in immense flocks during the spring and autumn migrations. The Black Oystercatcher, *Hamatopus niger*, and several species of Sandpiper frequent the beach.—J. H. KEEN (Massett, Queen Charlotte Island, British Columbia).

Reminiscences of the Kite in Bucks.—In the neighbourhood of the quaint old village of Quainton, in the Vale of Aylesbury, where I first saw daylight, there are many local names testifying to the former presence of the Kite, such as "Kite's Hill," "Kite's Wood," &c. When I was a boy our old gardener (Lloyd by name) used to delight me by telling stories of Kites picking up chickens from the farmyard, &c. He also used to relate how, when they found a nest of young birds, by a simple but cruel process, they caused the young birds to cry with pain, and that the old birds, supposing they were cold, would rob the drying-grounds of socks and small linen, of which the boys, of course, obtained possession. The old man, however, was not always veracious.—J. YOUNG (64, Hereford Road, W.)

[He may well have been so in this instance. The habit of carrying off small linen with which to line the nest was long ago noted, when Kites were more common in England. Shakespeare wrote, "when the Kite builds look to lesser linen" ('Winter's Tale,' iv. 2), and more modern observers have confirmed the truth of the remark. See the illustrations in support thereof given in 'The Ornithology of Shakespeare,' pp. 46, 47.—ED.]

REPTILES.

Variety of Common or Ringed Snake.—On the 16th of October last I met with a very distinct and pretty variety of *Natrix torquata* on Bloxworth Heath. It is of an ashy white colour, with a broad pale yellow-brown stripe down the middle of the upper side, from end to end, and

including the whole of the upper side of the head. The dark markings are normal, and, particularly on the under side, contrast strongly with the general pale hue of the snake. There is, however, no trace of the transverse yellow markings at the occiput, whence the species gets its trivial name—„ringed snake.” Its length is nearer three feet than two. Snakes are in great abundance here, but I have never before seen the above variety, nor am I aware that a similar one has ever been recorded from any locality.—O. PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE (Bloxworth).

SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

LINNEAN SOCIETY OF LONDON

April 21, 1892.—Prof. STEWART, President, in the chair.

Mr. Henry Groves was elected a Fellow.

An example of an Australian bird (*Gymnorhina*), which had lately been shot near Tor Abbey, Devonshire, after being observed all the winter, and which had doubtless escaped from confinement, was exhibited, on behalf of Mr. W. Else, Curator of the Torquay Museum.

On behalf of Mr. Charles Head, of Scarborough, two specimens of the Whiskered Bat, *Vespertilio mystacinus*, taken in that neighbourhood, were exhibited by Mr. J. E. Harting.

Mr. W. B. Hemsley read a paper entitled “Observations on a Botanical Collection made by Mr. A. E. Pratt in Western China, with descriptions of some new Chinese plants from various collections.” Mr. Pratt travelled, in 1889–90, in Western China, close on the borders of Eastern Tibet, and though chiefly in search of zoological specimens, he fortunately secured the services of a native who had been trained to dry plants by Dr. Henry, the result being that he was enabled to bring home a very interesting botanical collection. The plants were obtained chiefly at elevations of 9000 to 13,590 feet, in the neighbourhood of Tat-sien-lu, a frontier town situated in about 30° N. lat. and 102° 15' E. long., and although Mr. Hemsley reported that he had not finished working out the collection, he estimated that it contained about 500 species, of which perhaps 150 species were new to science. The paper was criticised by Mr. C. B. Clarke, who remarked that the mountain ranges of Western China seemed to abound in showy herbaceous plants, rivalling in this respect the richest districts of the Himalayan region, of which, in fact, it is a continuation.

Mr. H. M. Bernard then gave an abstract of a paper “On the relation of the Acaridæ to the Arachnida,” in which he argued that the former had

been developed from larval forms of the latter; though he found a difficulty in dealing with the segmentation, this being so profoundly modified and in some cases lost. The paper was criticised by Mr. A. D. Michael, Mr. Breeze, and Prof. G. B. Howes, all of whom, while testifying to the ingenuity of Mr. Bernard's reasoning, considered that there was hardly as yet sufficient evidence to justify the acceptance of his conclusions.

May 5.—Prof. STEWART, President, in the chair.

Messrs. Ernest Galpin and Henry Groves were admitted, and the following were elected:—Messrs. C. A. Barber, F. Enock, and Henry Power; and, as Foreign Members, Professors Goebel, Lütken, Farlow, and Karl Möbius.

On behalf of Mr. Holt, Prof. G. B. Howes exhibited and made remarks on a very interesting collection of the metamorphosing larvæ of Flat-fish.

Mr. Curtis showed a photograph of sections of the Silver and Douglas firs, illustrating the relative rate of growth in trees of the same age growing in the same soil, and under similar conditions in all respects, the diameter of the one (*A. Douglasii*) being double that of the other.

Mr. George Murray exhibited spirit specimens of *Ascothamnion intricatum*, an organism described as a siphonous Alga, but ascertained to be identical with an animal—namely, *Zoobotryon pellucidum*, Ehrenberg. He also exhibited two specimens of a palm, *Thrinax Morrisii*, Wright, peculiar to Anguilla in the Leeward Islands, and made some remarks as to the results of the recent cryptogamic collections made by Mr. W. R. Elliott for the West India Committee.

Mr. Holmes exhibited and made some observations on an abnormal development of the calyx in a primrose.

The President exhibited and explained a collection of Lepidoptera, containing several examples of mimicry between protected forms.

On behalf of Dr. J. Müller, Mr. Thiselton Dyer communicated a paper entitled "*Lichenes Epiphylli Spruceani*."

Mr. W. F. Kirby gave an abstract of a paper on the family *Saturnida*, with descriptions of new species in the British Museum.

In the absence of the author, Mr. W. Percy Sladen read a paper by the Rev. Hilderic Friend, entitled "*Observations on British Earthworms*."

The President announced that the Anniversary Meeting of the Society would be held on May 24th, at 3 p.m.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

April 5.—W. T. BLANFORD, Esq., F.R.S., F.Z.S., in the chair.

The Secretary read a report on the additions that had been made to the Society's Menagerie during the month of March, 1892.

Mr. Sclater exhibited and made remarks on the heads of a pair of Swayne's Antelopes, *Bubalis swaynei*, obtained by Mr. J. W. Clarke and his party in Somali-land, and sent for exhibition by Messrs. R. Ward & Co.

Prof. F. Jeffrey Bell read a note regarding the real habitat of the Land-Planarian, *Bipalium kewense*, which, as it appeared, was indigenous to one of the South Pacific Islands.

A communication was read from Mr. Edgar A. Smith, on the Land-Shell of St. Helena, based on a large and complete collection of the terrestrial Mollusks of that island made by Capt. W. H. Turton, R.E., and deposited in the British Museum. Mr. Smith estimated the total number of indigenous species of this group in St. Helena to be twenty-seven, of which seven only are now living on the island—the remainder having been exterminated by the destruction of the primeval forests.

Mr. F. E. Beddard read some notes on the anatomy of the Indian Dart, *Plotus melanogaster*, as observed in a specimen of this species recently living in the Society's Gardens.

Mr. Seebohm exhibited a specimen of a Pheasant from the valley of Zarafshan, in Central Asia, which he referred to a new species distinguishable from *P. principalis* by its white collar, and proposed to call it *P. tarnovskii*, after its discoverer.

Mr. R. J. L. Guppy exhibited specimens of the animal, the teeth and jaws, and the shell and egg of *Bulimus oblongus*, and remarked briefly thereon.

Mr. G. R. Sowerby read descriptions of seven new species of Land-Shell from the U.S. of Colombia.

A communication was read from Mr. W. Schaus, containing descriptions of some new species of Lepidoptera Heterocera from Brazil, Mexico, and Peru.

May 3.—Prof. W. H. FLOWER, C.B., LL.D., F.R.S., President, in the chair.

The Secretary read a report on the additions that had been made to the Society's Menagerie during the month of April, 1892, and called attention to a Finely-marked Owl, *Pseudoscops grammicus*, from Jamaica, presented by the Jamaica Institute, being the first example that has reached the Society.

Mr. Sclater exhibited and made remarks on a fine specimen of the egg of *Aepyornis*, the extinct giant bird of Madagascar, obtained from Southern Madagascar, and brought to this country by Mr. Pickersgill, H.B.M. Vice-Consul at Antananarivo.

Mr. Oldfield Thomas read a paper on the probable identity of certain specimens formerly in the Lidth de Jeude Collection, and now in the British Museum, with those figured by Albert Seba in his 'Thesaurus' of 1734.

Mr. F. E. Beddard read some notes on various species of aquatic Oligochaetous Worms that he had lately had an opportunity of examining. Amongst these was a new form allied to *Acanthodrilus* from the saline waters of the Pilcomayo, discovered by Mr. Graham Kerr during the Pilcomayo Expedition.

Dr. Hans Gadow read a paper on the systematic position of *Notoryctes typhlops*, the newly-discovered marsupial of Central Australia, and came to the conclusion that this anomalous form should stand as a distinct family of Polyprotodont Marsupials allied to the *Dasyuridae* and the *Peramelidae*.

A communication was read from Capt. H. G. C. Swayne, R.E., containing field-notes on the Antelopes of Northern Somali-land.

Mr. W. Schaus read the second portion of his descriptions of new species of Lepidoptera Heterocera from Brazil, Mexico, and Peru.

Mr. W. L. Sclater read some notes on certain species of Frogs in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, and gave descriptions of several new species based upon some of these specimens.—P. L. SCLATER, *Secretary*.

ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

April 27th, 1892.—ROBERT McLACHLAN, F.R.S., Treasurer, in the chair.

Mr. William Edward Baily, of Lynwood House, Paul Churchtown, Penzance; and Mons. Edmond Fleutiaux, of 1, Rue Malus, Paris, were elected Fellows of the Society.

Mr. C. G. Barrett exhibited, for Mr. Sabine, varieties of the following species:—viz., one of *Papilio machaon*, bred by Mr. S. Baily, at Wicken, in 1886; one of *Argynnis lathonia*, taken at Dover in September, 1883; one of *A. euphrosyne*, taken at Dover in 1890; and one of *A. selene*, taken at St. Osyth, in 1885, by Mr. W. H. Harwood. He also exhibited a long series of *Demas coryli*, reared by Major Still from larvæ fed exclusively on beech, which he said appeared to be the usual food of the species in Devonshire, instead of hazel or oak. Mr. Barrett also exhibited, for Mr. Sydney Webb, a number of varieties of *Arge galathea*, *Lasiommata megæra*, *Hipparchia tithonus*, and *Cænonympha pamphilus*, from the neighbourhood of Dover.

The Rev. J. Seymour St. John exhibited a variety of the female of *Hybernia progemmaria*, taken at Clapton in March last, in which the partially developed wings were equally divided in point of colour, the base being extremely dark and the outer portion of the wing very pale.

The Rev. Canon Fowler made some remarks on the subject of protective resemblance; he said his attention had been recently called to the fact that certain species of *Kallima* apparently lose their protective habit in some localities, and sit with their wings open, and that Dr. A. R. Wallace had informed him that he had heard of a species of *Kallima* sitting

upside down on stalks, and thus, in another way, abandoning its protective habits. Mr. W. L. Distant said that a species of butterfly in South Africa, which when its wings were vertically closed resembled the reddish soil on which it settled, in the Transvaal rested with open wings on quartzite rock, which the upper surface of the wings protectively resembled. Mr. Barrett, Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Jacoby, Mr. Champion, Mr. H. Goss, Canon Fowler, and Mr. Frohawk continued the discussion.

Mr. Goss informed the meeting that, in pursuance of a resolution of the Council passed in March last, he and Mr. Elwes had represented the Society at the recent Government enquiry, as to the safety and suitability of the proposed Rifle Range in the New Forest, held at Lyndhurst by the Hon. T. W. H. Pelham, on the 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd inst., and that they had given evidence at such enquiry, and addressed a large meeting of War Office officials, Verderers, and Commoners.—H. Goss and W. W. FOWLER, *Hon. Secs.*

May 11, 1892.—FREDERICK DUCANE GODMAN, F.R.S., President, in the chair.

Dr. Edward A. Heath, M.D., F.L.S., of 114, Ebury St., Pimlico, S.W.; and Mr. Samuel Hoyle, of Audley House, Sale, Cheshire, were elected Fellows of the Society.

The President announced the death, on the 4th of May, of Dr. Carl August Dohrn, of Stettin, one of the ten Honorary Fellows of the Society. Mr. Stainton expressed regret at the death of Dr. Dohrn, whom he had known for a great number of years, and commented upon his work and personal qualities.

Dr. D. Sharp exhibited drawings of the eggs of a species of Hemiptera, in illustration of a paper read by him before the Society; and also a specimen of a mosquito, *Megarhina hamorrhoidalis*, from the Amazon district, with the body, legs and palpi furnished with scales as in Micro-Lepidoptera.

The Rev. Canon Fowler, on behalf of Mrs. Venables, of Lincoln, exhibited cocoons of a species of *Bombyx* from Chota Nagpur, India; also the larvæ-cases of a species of Psychidæ, *Cholia crameri*, from Poona, India; and a curious case, apparently of another species of *Psychidæ*, from the island of Likoma, Lake Nyassa. Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Poulton, and Mr. Hampson made some remarks on the subject.

Mr. F. W. Frohawk, on behalf of the Hon. Walter Rothschild, exhibited a specimen of *Pseudacraa miraculosa* mimicking *Danais chrysippus*; also a specimen of the mimic of the latter,—*Diadema misippus*, and read notes on the subject.

Mr. C. G. Barrett exhibited, and commented on, a long series of specimens of *Melitæa aurinia* (*artemis*) from Hampshire, Pembrokeshire,

Cumberland, and other parts of the United Kingdom; also a long and varied series of *Coremia fluctuata*.

Mr. H. Goss exhibited, for Mr. W. Borrer, jun., of Hurstpierpoint, a photograph of a portion of a nest of *Vespa vulgaris* which had been built with the object of concealing the entrance thereto and protecting the whole nest from observation. He also read notes on the subject, which had been communicated to him by Mr. Borrer.

The Hon. Walter Rothschild communicated a paper entitled "Notes on a collection of Lepidoptera made by Mr. Wm. Doherty in Southern Celebes during August and September, 1891." He also sent for examination the types of the new species described therein.

Dr. Sharp read a paper entitled "On the eggs of an Hemipterous Insect of the family *Reduviidæ*."—H. GOSS and W. W. FOWLER, *Hon. Secs.*

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

Poultry for the Table and Market versus Fancy Fowls. With an Exposition of the Fallacies of Poultry Farming. By W. B. TEGETMEIER, F.Z.S. 8vo. London: Horace Cox. 1892.

As an authority on poultry and pigeons, Mr. Tegetmeier's name is so well known that anything from his pen on this subject is sure to be worth reading, and practical. The object of this his latest book is, by exposing certain fallacies and stating certain plain truths, to increase the quantity of eggs produced in this country, and to improve the quality of marketable poultry. Not that Mr. Tegetmeier is opposed to the keeping of purely ornamental poultry as such, or to the holding of poultry shows by those who are pleased with the cultivation of fancy breeds; but he evidently considers that poultry shows, as ordinarily conducted, do not sufficiently influence and encourage the production of marketable and useful poultry. Indeed he goes so far as to say on his first page, as the result of an experience of half a century, that no one breed of fowls has been taken in hand by the fancier that has not been seriously depreciated as a useful variety of poultry. At present the aim of the exhibitor is not to breed fowls for any useful purpose, but to produce them in accordance with the requirements of the fancier, in order to win prizes, so as to sell birds at enormous prices as winners, which are likely to

produce others in their turn. Hence the monstrosities which are exhibited. Cochins are one mass of useless feather; game hens stand a foot or more from the ground; Houdans, Crève-cœurs, and Polish are bred with tufts so large that they can scarcely see to feed; and so on with other varieties.

Mr. Tegetmeier compares fowls as they were with fowls as they are, and shows that for agricultural and economical purposes the modern fancy breeds are useless, as contrasted with the older varieties. He considers that Agricultural Societies are doing more harm than good by offering prizes for useless birds, and ignoring to a great extent the birds which would be of more benefit to the farmer and to the nation at large.

Songs of Universal Life. By REV. MARCUS S. C. RICKARDS, M.A., F.L.S., Vicar of Twigworth, Gloucester. 8vo, pp. 144. London: J. Baker & Son. 1891.

READERS of 'The Zoologist' will remember the author of this little volume of poems as a successful shore-shooter in North Devon, who was lucky enough to secure such rarities as the Pectoral Sandpiper and the American Stint. It is because Bird-Life enters very largely into the "Universal Life" which forms the subject of his poems that we make his book the subject of a short notice, feeling persuaded that we are doing well in calling the attention of lovers of birds to the very graceful lines he has devoted to some of their favourites. We may especially commend the Ode to a Reed Warbler, and some others dedicated to a Bullfinch, and to a pair of Ring Ouzels. There is also a poem entitled "Nature's Cycle," which we think is a description of a Devonshire lane leading down to the coast which is not unknown to us. We quote the three first stanzas of the little poem inscribed to the Pair of Ring Ouzels:—

"A deep and solemn silence broods
Over the breezy solitudes
Whereon the mountaineer intrudes
To crown a summer climb:
The soaring lark, a dreamy bee,
A pipit twittering from the lea,
Beguiled the journey, but no glee
Disturbs the peak sublime.

Yet music haunts it, and ere long
 From some wild crag will float a song,
 Perchance the protest loud and strong
 Of one who brooks no guest;
 Perhaps a love-plaint true and clear
 Meant to attract the distant ear
 Of wandering mate called back to cheer,
 Or mind the busy nest.

Sweep the grey boulders, and you soon
 Shall see the form whence flows the tune,
 And mark a crescent like the moon,
 Beneath a sable throat,
 With golden lips that warble till
 The yearnings melt into a trill
 Of joy, as flitting round the hill
 The truant hears his note."

In several of the poems which have other themes we find the fancy of the author to be so taken with Bird-Life that he is constantly borrowing from it some of his illustrations. Thus, in one called "A Woman's Destiny," we meet with the stanza:—

"Vain show and Fashion cannot fill
 The yawning gulf at a man's core:
 And wasted is the woman's skill,
 Who, copying, would please him more:
 The reeve may deem herself too plain,
 The ruff approves her russet dress,
 To don his plumage were no gain,
 To ape his strut would draw him less."

And what Mr. Rickards has written concerning the robbing of a bird's nest contains some words which are, unfortunately, only too true:—

"I took them as a thing of course;
 Collectors never know remorse,
 And seldom feel regret."

